

Learning Letters in the ABC Center & Beyond
Connect with the Classroom
Designing Letter Knowledge Activities**Overview**

This activity is an opportunity for you to assess and enhance your ABC center if you have one, and to initiate one if you don't. Then, you will design letter knowledge activities for the other centers in your classroom, and extend letter knowledge play throughout the school day.

Objectives

- To build an ABC center in your classroom (if you don't have one already) or to consider the state of your current ABC center, and generate ideas to enhance it.
- To think about how to incorporate letter knowledge into non-ABC center activities.
- To brainstorm ways of extending letter knowledge play across the school day.

Materials

- "Build or Enhance Your ABC Center" worksheet, below
- "Letter Knowledge in Other Centers" worksheet, below

Instructions

1. Watch the video segment on ABC centers in the *Connect with the Classroom* main page.
2. Initiate an ABC center in your classroom or assess and enhance your current ABC center.

If you are creating an ABC center in your classroom for the first time, use what you've seen and read in this course as your guide. The questions below will also help you consider the kinds of materials and activities you might want to include in your center. In the *Teachers' Treasure Chest* (in the Resources section of this course), you will find descriptions of several letter knowledge and ABC center activities you might want to consider.

If you already have an ABC center up and running in your classroom, describe your current ABC center—both the materials you've put there and the activities that take place there. Identify ways you might improve your ABC center, based on what you've read in the course and seen in the video segments so far. Consider the following questions:

- Questions about ABC center materials:
 - Have you included a variety of alphabet and letter toys (e.g., magnetic, foam, and felt letters; alphabet blocks; stamps and bean bags, etc.)?
 - Is there an assortment of fun writing implements and paper available to children?
 - Are there props for letter knowledge play and activities (e.g., pointers, magnifying glass, playdough and playdough stampers, etc.)?
- Questions about ABC center activities:
 - Have you included a variety of alphabet games, like “Hidden Letters”?
 - Is there an assortment of name games, like “Name Posters”?

CIRCLE Tip

To maintain children’s interest in letter knowledge play, it is important not only to provide them with a variety of games, props, and toys, but also to change these items frequently. By rotating the contents of your ABC center, you will ensure that activities stay fresh, as children are presented with new ways to express their letter knowledge.

3. Extend letter knowledge into other centers. Consider how you might incorporate letter knowledge activities and ideas into non-ABC center activities. Take cues from what you’ve read and observed so far, and keep in mind that:
 - Every time children identify (or try to identify) a letter or word, they are building letter knowledge.
 - Every time children write (or attempt to write) a letter or word, they are building letter knowledge.
4. Use the worksheets on the next two pages as a guide to help you reflect on your experiences with this activity. Have your thoughts and notes ready to share with other teachers in *Share Ideas*. Consider using the following prompts to guide your reflection and discussion:
 - If you created an ABC center in this activity, describe the kinds of materials and activities you chose to include in it. How did your children react to the new center?
 - What improvements (if any) did you make or do you plan to make to your ABC center?
 - Describe new ideas you have for incorporating letter knowledge play into your non-ABC centers.
 - What kinds of creative ways did you come up with to extend letter knowledge play beyond centers, for example, to transition times or meal times?

Name _____
Date _____

Build or Enhance Your ABC Center

Describe the current contents of your ABC center:

Describe any materials or activities that you would like to add to your ABC center:

Describe an alphabet or name game that children are currently using in your ABC center. How is it working? Are the children engaged?

Describe a new alphabet or name game that you would like to add to your ABC center. How might you introduce this game? In large group? In small groups?

Name _____
Date _____

Letter Knowledge in Other Centers

Consider ways to bring letter knowledge play and concepts into three of your non-ABC centers, such as the Library, Writing center, Art center, Pretend and Learn center, Construction, or Math and Science center.

Name of Center: _____

Letter Knowledge Activity: _____

Name of Center: _____

Letter Knowledge Activity: _____

Name of Center: _____

Letter Knowledge Activity: _____

